

Executive Summary

Non-U.S. Firms and Fair Employment in Northern Ireland: Synopsis of 2007 Survey and Findings.

Companies Surveyed: The Northern Ireland Service of Institutional Shareholder Services sent its annual *Survey on Operations in Northern Ireland* to corporate officials at 109 non-U.S. parent companies, which owned 145 separate subsidiaries or affiliates. The companies surveyed were held in the Calpers portfolio in 2007 and previously identified by the Northern Ireland Service as having operations in Northern Ireland. One of the companies initially surveyed—Tui AG—had closed all substantive operations in Northern Ireland. In all, the report covers 106 parent companies and 140 Northern Ireland employers owned by them.

Response: The Northern Ireland Service received complete or partial replies for 20 parent companies with Northern Ireland firms, obtaining a response rate of 17 percent of the companies surveyed that have current operations in Northern Ireland. A clear majority of the companies profiled in this report have responded to the Northern Ireland Service monitoring in the last three years.

2007 Survey Findings

- At Calpers non-U.S. portfolio companies whose work force composition is available, the Catholic representation of 38.1 percent is less than the current overall religious breakdown for Northern Ireland employers (nearly 44 percent) monitored by the Equality Commission and much less than the breakdown at U.S. companies (48 percent). The gap between Catholic representation at U.S. firms and non-U.S. firms that has shown up since the Northern Ireland Service began its non-U.S. survey in 2001 shows no sign of lessening.
- As has been the case for the last four years, far more firms surveyed appear to have problems with Catholic underrepresentation than with Protestant underrepresentation.
- Among the companies where Catholics or Protestants do not appear to achieve fair participation at present, there has been change in work force composition in the last several years at only about one-third of the companies for which sufficient data are available for examination. At the other two-thirds, work force composition has stayed about the same or representation has become more one-sided. This finding is unchanged from previous years.
- Companies that responded to the survey reported using—for the most part—a full range of affirmative action measures prescribed by Northern Ireland's fair employment law, including the use of goals and timetables.
- The number of parent companies with operations in Northern Ireland that appear to be compliant with the MacBride principles fell again in 2007 to 28, down from 37 in 2006. The proportion of compliant companies and their cumulative response to the Northern Ireland Service's survey nonetheless appears to reflect a level of comfort from non-U.S. firms with the principles and the Northern Ireland Service's monitoring process. Ten companies—Alliance & Leicester, Barclays, British Airways, BT Group PLC, Capita Group, InBev/Bass Ireland, Prudential PLC, Signet Group PLC, Sodexo Alliance and Wolseley—that had MacBride agreements are now considered non-compliant because they have not responded to the annual survey for two years.